



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
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Meeting Minutes 02/01/2006

ARLINGTON FINANCE COMMITTEE
 MINUTES OF MEETING
 7:30 PM O'NEILL ROOM, COMMUNITY SAFETY BUILDING
 2/1/06
 ATTENDEES:

McGaffigan*	Fey*	Dunn	O'Neill	Mahoney
DeCoursey*	Connors*	Simmons		
Tosti*	Foskett*	Deyst	Ronan*	
Ferrara*	Franclemont*	Jones*	Olsen*	
DuBois*	Howard	Fanning*	Carman*	Kneeland*

* Indicates present

VISITORS: Paul Bayer, Ed Starr, Steve Makowka

MINUTES of 1/25/06 meeting were approved as amended.
 Unanimous.

STABILIZATION FUND POLICY: Starr presented a handout of his analysis of "How can Arlington gain some independence from fluctuations in State financial contributions?" With data provided by Nancy Galkowsky for the last 25 years, roughly since the start of Proposition 2.5, Ed plotted the year-to-year variations in the state's contributions, in current year dollars and in constant 2005 dollars. The state met its responsibilities until 1989. To reduce the impact of variations, Starr suggested that a 5-year average of funds received from the state might help with planning the annual Town budget and damp the impact of year-to-year fluctuations. If more comes from the state, put the money in a pool. If less comes from the state, the town could draw from the pool. Starr asked for feedback on his model and suggestions for further analysis. The Finance Committee thanked Starr for his valuable work in studying this issue.

HISTORIC DISTRICTS APPROPRIATION: Makowka, Chair, Arlington Historic Districts Commission, presented a request for additional funding for the Commission. Warrant Article # TBD. Using his letter of Jan 15, 2006 as a handout, he requested the budget be increased to \$5,100 from the \$3,780 currently allocated for the FY07 budget. The commission is very budget conscious, and it restricts its activities to essential responsibilities of maintaining files of AHDC actions, serving notices of hearings, and administering hearing schedules. The only discretionary item in their proposed 2007 budget is \$400 for sign replacement. Last year's Town Meeting expanded the Pleasant Street Historic District, adding some 42 properties on Maple and Pleasant Streets to the HDC's jurisdiction, for a current total of 342 properties. There will be 8 more proposed to be added in the 2006 Warrant. The Commission holds 35-40 formal hearings per year, with about the same number of informal discussions. The Commission issues certificates of non-applicability. Their goal is to prevent unsympathetic additions in designated Historic Districts. They do not have jurisdiction over house color or maintenance conditions, and their restriction decisions must be legally sustainable. The only legal appeal was one about four years ago. The Commission is required to publish legal notices of hearings in the newspaper.

VOTED to increase the Historic District Commission budget to \$4,700. Unanimous

WARRANT: Fin Com reviewed the current draft warrant articles and picked out those articles to hear reported.

COMMITTEE: Kneeland will try to set up appointments for John Bilafer on 2/6; Assessors, Town Manager on 3/1; Capital Budget Com on 3/6. Fanning to set up School Committee for 3/8. DeCoursey to ask MM to come 3/6 or 3/8. Also see if Permanent Town Building Committee can give us an update. If Kneeland cannot schedule enough meetings for Feb. 6, then Alan Tosti will cancel meeting and notify all members.

RESERVE FUND BALANCE: \$248,590.66

Minutes taken by Gail DuBois. Peter B Howard Secretary 2/3/06

cc Selectmen, FinCom Members, Town Manager, Library File, Town Web Site FinCom Web Site